



image

288

DIGITAL  
EDITION

TODD  
MCFARLANE

JASON  
SHAWN  
ALEXANDER

# SPAWN





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SPAWN CREATED BY  
TODD McFARLANE



#### PREVIOUSLY IN SPAWN

Spawn escapes from prison again and goes to visit Marc Rosen, a friend of Jim Downing (the former Spawn). Al explains who he is and that he needs Marc's help for the next part of his plan. Later that night, Spawn confronts the boss who has threatened to dismember him. Spawn tells him that he will do anything to obtain the information he needs. He then unleashes black crows that pull the man apart, extricating things Spawn needs. The birds finish their job, leaving a bloody carcass. Spawn then returns to the prison much to the surprise of the guards.





I THOUGHT  
THEY SAID HE  
ESCAPED?

HE DID.

THEN WHY  
**THE F\*CK** IS  
HE RIGHT  
THERE?

DON'T KNOW.

YOU'RE  
SAYING HE  
ESCAPED... THEN  
DECIDED TO  
JUST COME  
BACK AND HANG  
HIMSELF?

I'M SAYING  
HE ESCAPED.  
PERIOD. WHY DO  
YOU THINK THE  
LAB LOOKS LIKE  
SHIT?\*

I TALKED  
TO THOMPSON,  
HE WAS ON DUTY.  
THIS GUY WASN'T  
ON THE PREMISES.  
NOT FOR THE LAST  
TWELVE HOURS  
AT LEAST.

\*See last issue -- Todd





SO, WHAT  
ARE WE GOING  
TO DO? WE  
DON'T EVEN  
KNOW IF HE'S  
ALIVE!

WE  
WAIT.

**WAIT?**  
FOR WHAT? I  
HEARD THIS GUY IS  
LIKE SOME DAMN  
ZOMBIE. HE  
WON'T DIE.



THEN KEEP  
YOUR GUNS  
POINTED. I'M  
STILL WAITING  
ON ORDERS  
FROM THE  
BOSS.

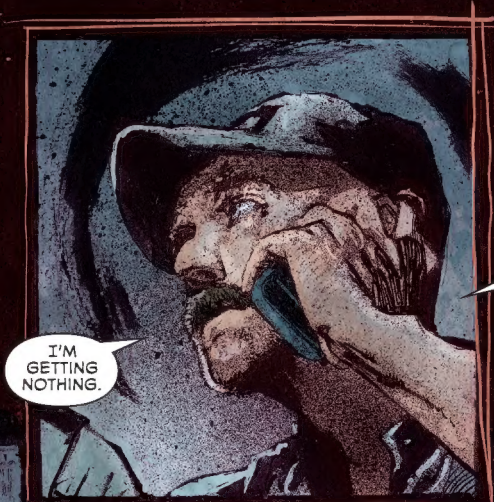
WHERE  
IS HE? WHY  
ISN'T HE  
ANSWERING  
YOU?



HOW  
DO I  
KNOW?

I'LL  
TRY HIM  
AGAIN.





I'M  
GETTING  
NOTHING.

WE CAN'T  
WAIT ANY  
LONGER. I'M  
CALLING  
UPSTAIRS.



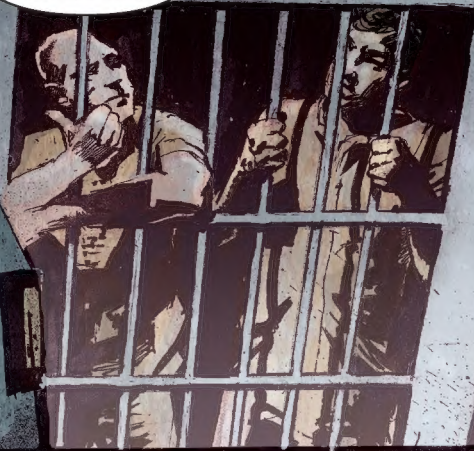
I'M HERE,  
WHAT'S  
HAPENING?

DON'T  
KNOW YET, BUT  
THAT NEW PRISONER,  
THE ONE THAT  
ESCAPED---  
HE'S BACK.



WHAT  
DO YOU  
MEAN HE'S  
BACK?


JUST GRAB  
YOUR GUYS AND GET  
DOWN HERE.  
MANAGEMENT HAS  
GONE A.W.O.L. WE'RE  
ON OUR OWN.








UNIT B.  
IMMEDIATE SECURITY  
NEEDED IN SUB-  
SECTOR 9.



JESUS!  
SOMETHING'S  
GOT THE C.O.'S  
EXCITED.

WORD QUICKLY SPREADS AMONG  
THE PRISONERS. THEY UNDERSTAND  
HOW RARE IT IS TO SEE THE  
CORRECTIONS OFFICERS IN ANY  
TYPE OF PANIC. WHEN THOSE  
MOMENTS ARISE, THEY POUNCE AT  
THE OPPORTUNITY.



THAT NEW GUY,  
THE ONE THEY TOOK  
TO THE BASEMENT,  
HE'S DONE SOME-  
THING. GOT THEM  
SCARED.



TELL  
MANUEL TO  
GET HIS CREW  
READY. I SEE ANY  
MORE THINNING OUT  
OF THE C.O.'S WE'RE  
JUMPING ALL OVER  
IT. THEY GIVE US  
ANY OPENING,  
WE GO.

ALERT  
JEROME AND  
LITTLE MIKEY  
TOO.





JENNY! CAN YOU WAIT UP A MOMENT?



PLEASE, ONE LAST QUESTION IF YOU DON'T MIND.



PERSISTENT TODAY, AREN'T WE BOYS? WHAT'S ON YOUR MINDS?

WE'VE HEARD SOME RUMORS THAT POTENTIALLY THE 'MASKED MAN' FROM TIMES SQUARE MIGHT NOT STILL BE IN THE GOVERNMENT'S POSSESSION.

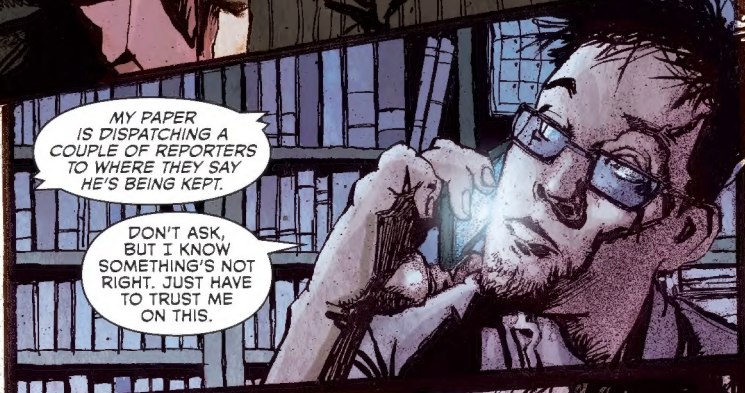
YOU ALREADY HAVE MY STATEMENT. I'M NOT GOING TO ELABORATE FURTHER.

SO YOU STILL HAVE HIM?



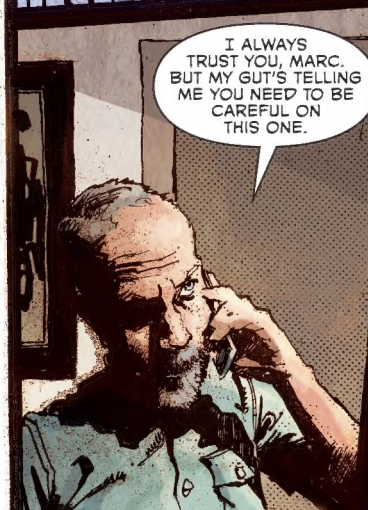
DID YOU BELIEVE WHAT SHE WAS SAYING?

I'M NOT SURE, BUT SHE GOT RID OF US PRETTY FAST.



MY PAPER IS DISPATCHING A COUPLE OF REPORTERS TO WHERE THEY SAY HE'S BEING KEPT.

DON'T ASK, BUT I KNOW SOMETHING'S NOT RIGHT. JUST HAVE TO TRUST ME ON THIS.




I ALWAYS TRUST YOU, MARC. BUT MY GUT'S TELLING ME YOU NEED TO BE CAREFUL ON THIS ONE.



I WILL. THANKS, LARRY.





...AND THEY'RE  
DISTRACTED RIGHT  
NOW WHICH MAY GIVE US  
A CHANCE. MOST OF US  
ARE IN HERE FOR LIFE  
ANYWAY, SO WHO GIVES  
A SHIT IF WE GET IN  
TROUBLE?

LET'S  
BURN THIS  
PLACE  
DOWN.

SOME  
OF US GOT  
PAROLE  
COMING.


I'M OUT  
IN A  
MONTH.

ATTENTION INMATES!  
RETURN TO YOUR CELLS  
IMMEDIATELY! THERE  
WILL BE AN INSPECTION  
OF ALL CELLS. REPEAT!  
RETURN TO YOUR  
CELL BLOCK!

GET YOUR  
ASS MOVING!  
NOW!

I DON'T  
GIVE A SHIT.  
I'M NOT  
GOING.


**PAP**



SLOWLY EVERYTHING  
STARTS TO UNRAVEL...  
JUST HAD HE'D PLANNED.



BELOW.




GUYS... WASN'T THAT ROTTING CYBORG BODY HANGING IN THE SAME PLACE THIS GUY IS NOW? I'M ALMOST POSITIVE. AND THE 'BORG WAS HERE AFTER THIS GUY DISAPPEARED.

WHO GIVES A CRAP? OUR SECURITY TASK IS TO WATCH THIS PRISONER, NOT SOME PILE OF JUNK.



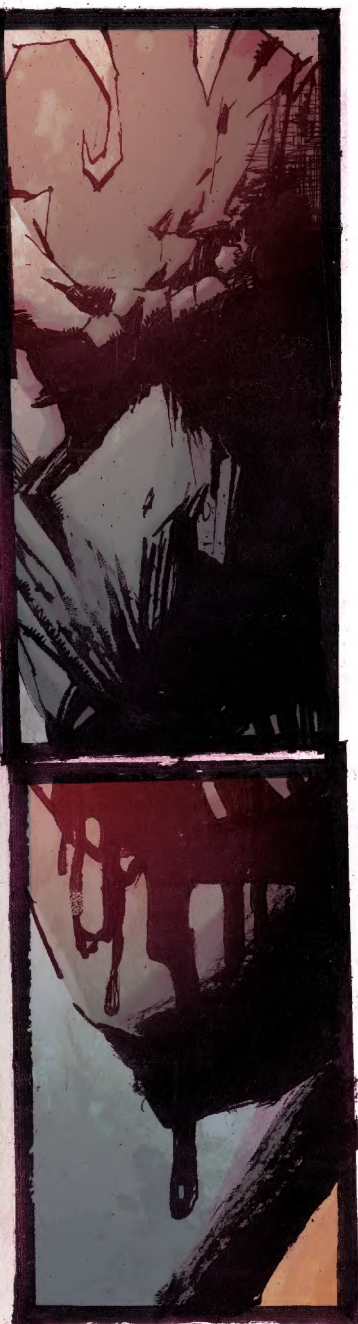
JUNK? NOTHING COMES INTO THIS FACILITY THAT'S JUST "JUNK."

IF THEY BROUGHT IT HERE, IT HAS VALUE TO SOME GOVERNMENT DIVISION OR CORPORATION.




THAT'S NOT OUR PROBLEM, THE GUY HANGING HERE IS. TRYING TO SOLVE THIS 'BREAKING OUT... BREAKING IN' TRICK IS WHERE WE KEEP OUR FOCUS.

HEADQUARTERS IS ALREADY CRAWLING UP OUR ASSES ABOUT ALL THIS.









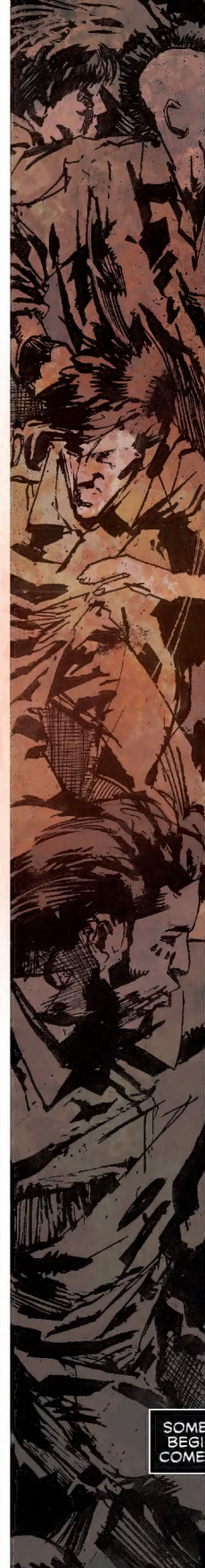
AS TENSIONS  
MOUNT ABOVE...




SOMETHING  
BELOW  
STARTS TO  
STIR.



SOMETHING  
BEGINS TO  
COME ALIVE!







SOMETHING SO DARK, SO TERRIFYING,  
THAT THE GUARDS LEFT STANDING  
WOULDN'T BE ABLE TO FIND WORDS  
PROPER ENOUGH TO DESCRIBE  
WHAT THEY'RE ABOUT TO SEE.

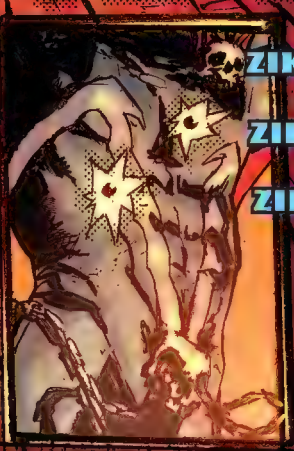
BUT THOSE WHO PLAY  
THIS SECRET 'SHADOW  
GAME' -- THEY'LL KNOW  
AND THAT'S ALL SPAWN  
WANTS -- TO MAKE  
SURE THERE ISN'T A  
SINGLE ENEMY FROM  
HEAVEN OR HELL THAT  
DOESN'T KNOW HE'S ON A  
**RAMPAGE!**





CHIK

SKREEEEEEEE



ZIK  
ZIK  
ZIK







AND MORE THAN THAT, HE  
WANTS THEM TO KNOW THEY'RE  
DEALING WITH A **SPAWN** THEY'VE  
**NEVER** SEEN BEFORE!

BOOM BOOM

BOOM BOOM BOOM  
BOOM BOOM BOOM

THOOM



THE SPAWN DESCENDS ON THEM LIKE A WAVE OF BLACK WATER, CAUSING THEM TO SHOOT THEIR WEAPONS OUT OF SHEER INSTINCT. WHEN THE FINAL AUTOPSY REPORTS ARE WRITTEN, IT WILL TELL THE TRAGIC STORY OF HOW A HALF DOZEN MEN WERE ALL ACCIDENTALLY KILLED WITH "FRIENDLY FIRE."

THE TWO GUARDS LEFT ALIVE WILL BE RECOMMENDED FOR PSYCHIATRIC CARE AFTER TELLING THEIR TALE. BOTH WILL LIVE OUT THE REST OF THEIR LIVES NEVER AGAIN ABLE TO FUNCTION LIKE NORMAL HUMAN BEINGS.

THEY WILL FOREVER MORE SEE THE WORLD IN SHADES OF BLACK, NO MATTER HOW BRIGHT THE SUN MAY BURN. THE BLACKNESS WILL, FROM TIME TO TIME, APPEAR TO HAVE A SEARING PAIR OF GREEN, GLOWING EYES.

BUT FOR NOW, THAT BLACKNESS HAS SERVED A DIFFERENT PURPOSE.

DID YOU HEAR THEY WERE HAVE ELECTRICAL PROBLEMS?

NO.



LUCKILY IT LASTED A MINUTE OR...



MY

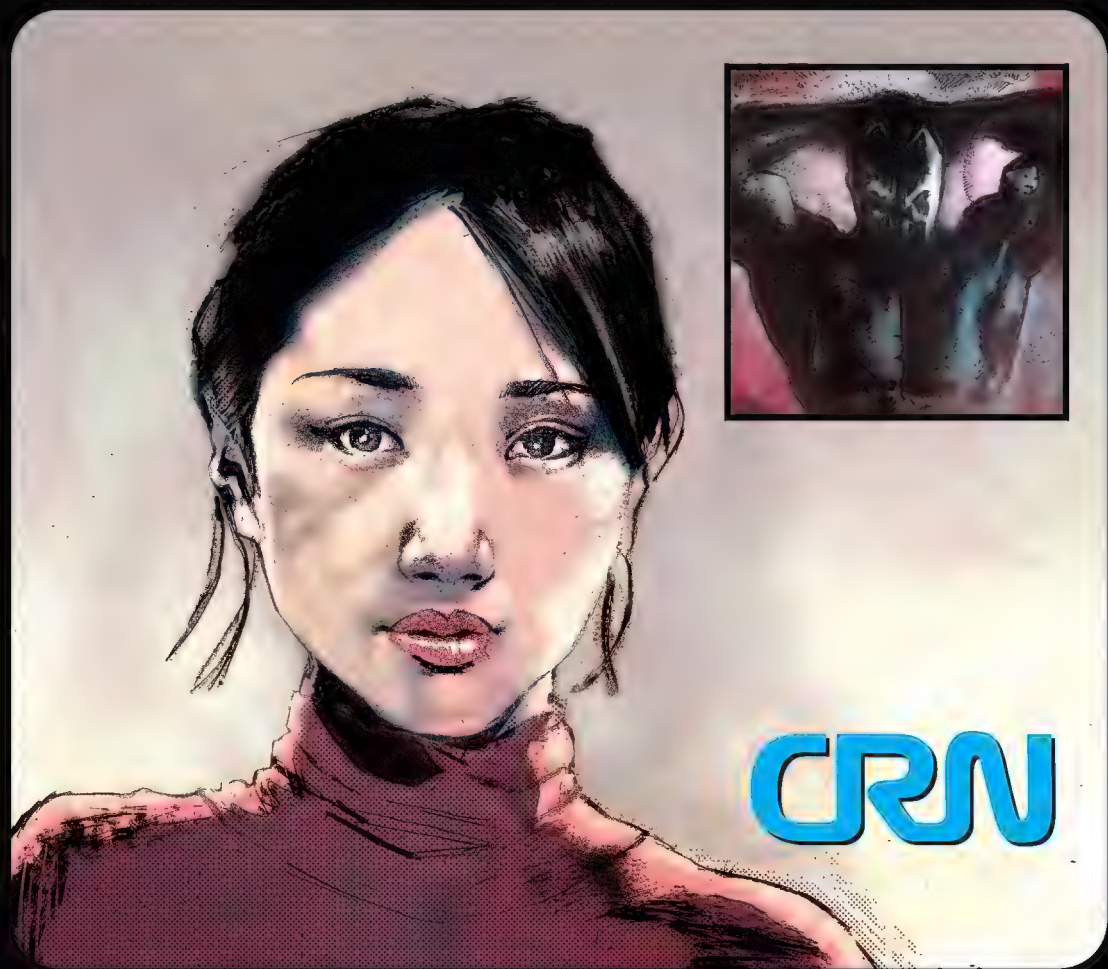
GOD



They're all gone.







"MEDIA ATTENTION CONTINUES TO MOUNT, AS OFFICIALS AT THE WHITE HOUSE AND THE PENTAGON HAVE BOTH BEEN UNUSUALLY SILENT IN THEIR RECENT RESPONSES TO THE QUESTION OF WHETHER A MAN DETAINED FOR KIDNAPPING LAST WEEK IS STILL IN THEIR POSSESSION.

"IN THE LIMITED ANSWERS BEING GIVEN, THERE SEEMS TO BE SOME CONTRADICTIONS IN THE STATEMENTS. MORE CURIOUS IS WHY THIS PARTICULAR KIDNAPPER SEEMS TO BE SO 'SPECIAL' THAT HIS INCARCERATION EVEN BECAME A TOPIC AT THE HIGHEST LEVEL OF OUR GOVERNMENT, OR WHY WE ARE EVEN DISCUSSING HIS WHEREABOUTS IN THE FIRST PLACE.

"SOURCES SAY THAT A FEW NEWS OUTLETS, OURS INCLUDED, HAVE DISPATCHED A REPORTER TO THE PRISON FACILITY WHERE THIS MAN IS NOW BEING KEPT. BUT, EVEN MORE CURIOUS, IS THAT MANY SOURCES INSIDE THE CONGRESSIONAL HALLS AND AT THE WHITE HOUSE, ARE TELLING US THAT THERE IS A SENSE OF PANIC AMONG SOME OF OUR TOP RANKING POLITICIANS. PRESSURE SEEMS TO BE MOUNTING TO QUICKLY PUT A LID ON THIS STORY, BUT ALREADY IT SEEMS THAT MORE THAN A FEW STAFF AIDES HAVE BEEN FIRED AND MORE CONSEQUENTIAL HEADS WILL ROLL SOON.

"THE QUESTION IS WHY? AND THE MORE THEY TRY AND DENY ANY PROBLEMS, THE BIGGER THE STORY GETS. SPECULATION IS ALSO MOUNTING THAT SOME SORT OF COVER-UP AMONG SOME MEMBERS IN WASHINGTON MAY BE AT THE HEART OF THIS CONTROVERSY. WE'VE ALSO BEEN TOLD THAT...WAIT! I'VE JUST BEEN TOLD THAT A MASSIVE PRISON BREAK HAS OCCURRED AT THAT DETENTION CENTER. OUR EYEWITNESS REPORTER IS DESCRIBING AN ACCELERATED CARNAGE BETWEEN INMATES AND SECURITY WITH FULL-SCALE FIGHTING WITH PERHAPS DOZENS OF DEAD ALREADY. WE'RE BEING TOLD ... "

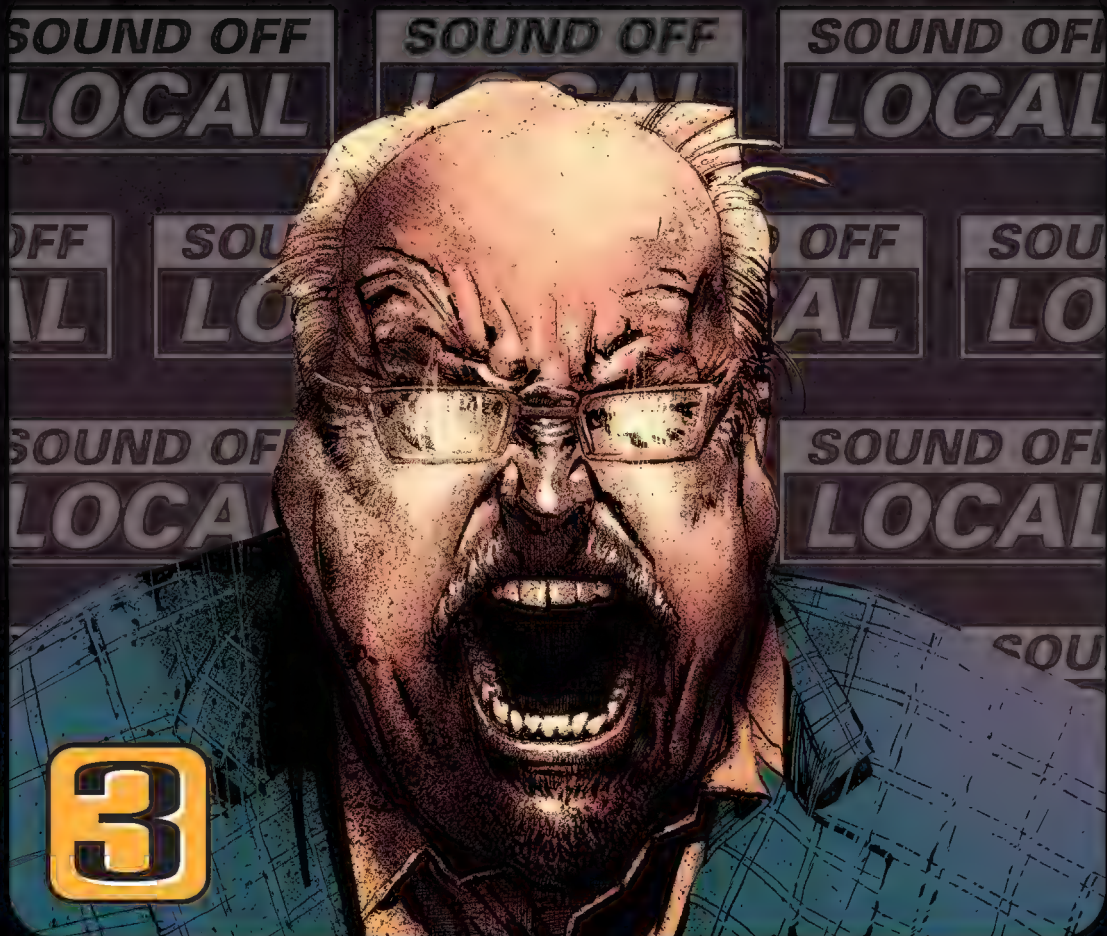


"...IT'S A **WAR ZONE!**... THE LIKES OF WHICH THIS COUNTRY HAS NEVER SEEN BEFORE. AND WHEN THE FINAL TOTAL OF LOST LIVES IS CONFIRMED, IT WILL BE AT A LEVEL THAT WILL DEMAND HUNDREDS OF ANSWERS FOR THE CITIZENS THAT RESIDE IN THIS GREAT COUNTRY. WE HAVE TO HAVE THE CONFIDENCE WE CAN GO TO BED AT NIGHT KNOWING OUR GOVERNMENT IS CAPABLE OF PROTECTING US."

"WITHOUT THAT, A FREE SOCIETY, AND ITS DEMOCRACY, WILL SOON BEGIN TO DECAY."







"ONE WORD...**CHAOS!!** COMPLETE AND UTTER CHAOS!"

MASSIVE DESTRUCTION AND CASUALTIES FROM BOTH SIDES WERE CAUGHT ON VIDEO. THE MILITARY CLEARED THE AREA OF ANY REPORTERS OR CIVILIANS SO THE EXTENT OF DAMAGE IS UNKNOWN AT THIS TIME. SO, FOR ALL YOU LEVEL HEADED FREE-THINKERS OUT THERE...THIS IS **EXACTLY WHY** THERE'S A SECOND AMENDMENT! OUR GOVERNMENT CAN'T CONFIRM YET, IF HUNDREDS OF CONVICTED KILLERS HAVE BEEN RE-CAPTURED OR IF THEY'RE OUT ROAMING THE VERY STREET YOUR FAMILY **LIVES ON!**

"AND UNTIL THEY CAN CONVINCE US OTHERWISE, I'D HAVE EVERY GUN AND WEAPON YOU POSSESS READY TO GO! AND IF ANYONE COMES CLOSE TO YOUR DOOR...**SHOOT THEM!** ASK QUESTIONS LATER! **THIS IS WAR** AND WE WILL DEFEND OURSELVES IF ELECTED OFFICIALS CAN'T DO THEIR JOB!"

AND THOUGH I LOVE OUR MILITARY, I'M NOT **HOLDING MY BREATH** HOPING THEY'LL BE ABLE TO CAPTURE EVERY LAST ONE OF THOSE SCUM-RIDDEN CROOKS BEFORE EVEN SOME INNOCENT, FREEDOM LOVING AMERICAN IS KILLED FIRST!

**HELL IS COMING...**AND IT JUST MAY BE ON YOUR **DOORSTEP** AT THIS **VERY MOMENT!**"







INSIDE THE NOW-EMPTY  
PRISON BLOCK STRIDES THE  
CRIMSON-CLOAKED MASTERMIND  
OF ALL THIS CHAOS.

AND FOR A BRIEF MOMENT, HE  
ALLOWS A CROOKED SMILE TO  
CROSS HIS FACE AS HE REPLAYS  
A PRIOR CONVERSATION.



I DON'T  
KNOW...  
I SWEAR.

I DON'T  
KNOW.

THEN WHO  
DOES?

YES,  
YOU DO.

THIS IS  
BULLSHIT.  
BUT I KNOW  
ANOTHER  
INMATE.

I NEED  
A NAME.



CIRELLI.





SKRIC

SKRIC

SKRIC



HELLO,  
CIRELLI.

HAVE YOU  
FOUND YOUR  
MOTIVATION  
YET?



SKRIC

SKRIC



SORRY  
ABOUT YOUR  
TONGUE. BUT SINCE  
YOU REFUSED TO TALK  
TO ME, I ASSUMED  
YOU DIDN'T HAVE  
ANY MORE USE  
FOR IT.



BUT  
THERE ARE OTHER  
WAYS TO  
COMMUNICATE.

GIDEON  
ALBAN



ALBANY,  
NEW YORK.

HOW'S YOUR  
FAMILY DOING  
THESE DAYS,  
CHARLES?

VERY  
WELL, SIR.  
THANK YOU  
FOR  
ASKING.

YOUR  
DAUGHTER,  
SHE'S JUST  
STARTING  
COLLEGE,  
ISN'T SHE?

SHE  
IS, PRE-  
MED.

GOOD  
FOR HER.  
YOU  
SHOULD BE  
PROUD.

AND  
WHERE  
ARE WE  
GOING  
TODAY?

BOSTON.  
SOMETHING  
IMPORTANT  
JUST CAME  
UP.

MOMENTS LATER.

I'M IN  
A RUSH,  
CHARLES, WHY  
AREN'T YOU  
DRIVING?

THE CHAUFFEUR SAYS NOTHING.  
HIS FULL ATTENTION IS  
FOCUSED ON THE THING THAT  
STANDS BLOCKING HIS WAY.



BECAUSE LOST IN ALL THE CONFUSION  
AT THE PRISON FACILITY RIOTS WAS  
THE FACT THAT ANOTHER PRISONER HAD  
DISAPPEARED. AND WHAT'S MORE  
DISTURBING... THIS PRISONER HAS BEEN  
DEAD FOR NEARLY A DECADE.



HE'S...  
NOT...  
ALONE.



# SPAWNING GROUND

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## MONTHLY CONTEST

WIN a 10 minute Skype call with Todd McFarlane and some COOL McFarlane toys and comics!

Each month readers will be giving a secret code word available ONLY in Spawning Ground.

Enter that code word HERE:  
**mcFarlane.com/spawningground** for your chance to win awesome prizes!

Spawn issue #288 Code Word: **BLACKCROWS**

Winners will be notified by email two weeks after the release of the comic.

Good Luck!

Thank you, as always, for being loyal fans of Spawn!

Shannon Bailey  
Publishing Coordinator



### NEXT ISSUE

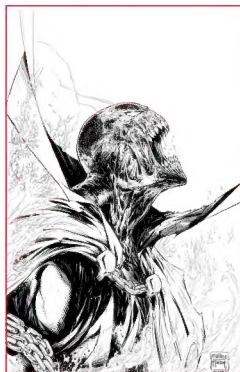
Spawn, the escaped felon, goes on national television to expose his enemies.



Spawn #19 cover by Greg Capullo.



Spawn #287 cover by Francesco Mattina.



Spawn #288 cover by Francesco Mattina and Todd McFarlane.





# STAR TREK

## THE NEXT GENERATION

### MIRROR BROKEN

TRAVEL INTO THE DANGEROUS "MIRROR, MIRROR" ALTERNATE REALITY FOR THE FIRST TIME WITH THE NEXT GENERATION CREW!

SCOTT TIPTON, DAVID TIPTON (W) • J.K. WOODWARD (A) • GEORGE CALTSOUDAS (C)

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